AN

ESSAY

On the ORIGINAL of

Funeral SERMONS, ORATIONS, and ODES.

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Occaſioned by Two

Funeral Diſcourſes,

Lately Publiſhed on the Death of *Dame* MARY PAGE, Relict of Sir *Gregory Page*, Bart.

The one by Mr. *HARRISON*, with an Oration at her Interment; and an Ode ſacred to her Memory.

The other by Mr. *RICHARDSON*.

With ſome Obſervations on each of them.

In a LETTER to a Friend.

——*Si quid noviſti rectius iſtis,*
Candidus imperti: ſi non, his utere mecum.

Horat. Epiſt. Lib. 1. Ep. 6.

LONDON:

Printed, and Sold by J. ROBERTS, in *Warwick-Lane*; and H. WHITRIDGE, the Corner of *Caſtle-Alley*, *Cornhill*. 1729. Price 6*d*.

AN

ESSAY

On the Oration of

Funeral SERMONS, ORATIONS, and ODES.

Occasioned by Two

Funeral Discourses,

lately Published on the Death of Dr.

MARY PACK, Relict of Sir Geo.

Pack, Bart.

The one by Mr. HARRISON, with an Oration at her Interment; and an Ode facred to her Memory.

The other by Mr. RICHARDSON.

With Some Observations on each of them.

In a LETTER to a Friend.

Cunabula primi: Ne mea, bis aterve meatus.

Horat. Epist. Lib. 1. Ep. 6.

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AN ESSAY

On the Original of Funeral Sermons, Orations, and Odes, &c.

Dear Sir,

I HAVE for ſome time been of opinion, that the cuſtom of preaching Funeral Sermons, and making Orations at the interment of the dead, took its riſe from ſome ſuch practice firſt in uſe among the Heathens: Two diſcourſes of this kind having been lately publiſhed on the death of the Lady *Page*, both attended with ſome odd circumſtances, which I am ſenſible you are no ſtranger to, they have occaſioned ſome freſh thoughts on this ſubject, the reſult of which I now ſend you, together with ſome few obſervations on the ſaid diſcourſes, all which I humbly ſubmit to your impartial judgment.

The *Egyptians*, the posterity of *Ham*, were the first cultivators of idolatrous worship, and superstition after the Flood; they were the first that gave [a] names to Deities, built temples, erected altars, and set up images for divine adoration. They were the first [b] who asserted the immortality of the soul, its transmigration into all kinds of animals in earth, air, and sea, and its return to the human body; which they supposed to be within the term of three thousand years: Hence proceeded their very great care in embalming of their dead bodies, and their being at such vast expences, as they were, in building proper repositories for 'em; for they were more solicitous about their graves than their houses: This gave birth to those wonders of the world, the *Pyramids*, which were built for the burial of their kings, with such vast charges, and almost incredible magnificence, the fame whereof has since spread it self all the world over. It cannot therefore be foreign to my present design, to enquire after what manner these people performed their funeral Obsequies, which, I find, was as follows.

"When the corps was to be buried, the "neareſt a-kin gave notice of the day for the "funeral to the judges, the relations, and the "friends of the deceased; and particularly "gave out, that He, naming the name of the

[a] Herodot. l. 2. c. 4. & 58. Lactant. de Orig. Error. l. 2. c. 14. [b] Herodot. l. 2. c. 123.

"de-

" deceaſed, would then paſs the lake. The " day being come, more than forty of the " judges ſeated themſelves in the form of a " ſemicircle by the ſide of the lake, where the " boat, which is managed by a pilot, whom " the *Egyptians* in their language call *Charon*, " being firſt prepar'd for uſe, is drawn up in " readineſs. The Veſſel being let into the lake, " before the deceaſed's coffin is put into it, " every one has a liberty to bring in an accu- " ſation againſt him. If any one can prove " he has lived a bad life, the judges pronounce " the ſentence, and the corps is forbid the uſual " ſepulture; but if it appears, that the accuſer " is guilty of calumny, he's liable to the ſe- " vereſt puniſhment. When either there is no " accuſer, or a falſe one, the relations lay " aſide their mourning, and praiſe the deceaſed. " They make no mention of his deſcent, as the " *Grecians* do, becauſe they reckon that all in " *Egypt* are equally noble; but then they re- " hearſe his education and learning in child- " hood, and his piety, juſtice, continency, and " other virtues in his adult age; beſeeching the " Gods below to receive him into the ſociety " of the pious: while the multitude, in the " mean time, applaud and proclaim the praiſes " of the deceaſed, as one that is to ſpend an " eternity with the godly in *Hades* [c].

In this account it is eaſy to obſerve the firſt rudiments of Funeral Orations, and what was

[c] Diodor. Sicul. l. 1. c. 5.

the

the ſubject of 'em, which were afterwards formed into a more polite and regular manner by other nations, who received this cuſtom from the *Egyptians*. Nor can I omit remarking, that thoſe funeral ſolemnities were attended, not only with Orations in praiſe of the deceaſed, but with prayers for him; which prayers, it ſeems, were made by one who perſonated the deceaſed: an entire form of one of 'em is preſerved by *Porphyry* [d], and perhaps it may, in ſome meaſure, gratify your curioſity to recite it from him. "When, ſays he, they, *h. e.* "the *Egyptians*, embalm their deceaſed no- "bles, they privately take out the entrails, and "lay them up in an ark or cheſt: moreover, a- "mong other things which they do in favour "of the deceaſed, lifting up the ark or cheſt to "the ſun, they invoke him; one of the *Li-* "*bitinarii* * making a prayer for the de- "ceaſed, which *Euphantus* has tranſlated "out of the *Egyptian* language, and is as "follows: O Lord, the Sun, and all the Gods "who give life to men, receive me, and ad- "mit me into the ſociety of the immortal "ones, for as long as I lived in this world, I "religiouſly worſhipped the Gods whom my "parents ſhewed me, and have always ho-

[d] De Abſtinentia, l. 4. ſect. 10. * *Theſe were a ſort of men who provided every thing needful for burials, ſo called from the goddeſs* Libitina, *in whoſe temple all ſuch things were expoſed to ſale. Vid.* Kennet's Antiq. Par. 2. B. 5. c. 10. p. 340.

"noured

" noured thoſe who begat my body: nor have
" I killed any man, nor have I defrauded any
" of what has been committed to my truſt,
" nor have I done any thing which is inexpia-
" ble. Indeed, whilſt I was alive, if I have
" ſinned either by eating or drinking any thing
" which was not lawful; not through my ſelf
" have I ſinned, but through theſe, ſhewing
" the ark and cheſt were the entrails were.
" And having thus ſpoke, he caſts it into the
" river, but the reſt of the body he embalms
" as pure." I can't but conclude, that ſuch like practices as theſe among the Heathens, have given riſe to praying for departed ſaints among the *Papiſts*.

But to go on: The *Grecians* received the ſeeds of ſuperſtition and idolatrous worſhip [e] from the *Egyptians*, thro' the coming of *Cecrops*, *Cadmus*, *Danaus*, and *Erechtheus*, into *Greece*. The firſt of theſe was the firſt king of *Athens*, from whoſe coming thither, the *Attic Æra* begins; where he firſt [f] introduced the worſhip of *Jupiter* and *Minerva*, ſetting up an altar for the one, and the image of the other; and among the reſt of the *Egyptian* cuſtoms and laws which he brought along with him into *Greece*, the burial of the dead bodies in the earth was one. Of this *Cicero* particularly informs us in the following words: " They report, ſays he, that from

[e] Herodot. l. 2. c. 4. & 58. [f] Euſeb. de præpar. Evangel. l. 10. c. 9.

" the

" the times of *Cecrops*, it remained a cuſtom at " *Athens* to that day, to bury the bodies of " their dead in the earth " [g]: which ſome ſay were laid with the head towards the *eaſt* [h], and others towards the *weſt* [i]. But what *Cicero* ſays, as to their manner of interment, is this: " That the relations, or neighbours of the de- " ceaſed, laid the body in the ground, and ha- " ving caſt the earth over the corps, ſowed the " ground with all manner of grain or fruit; " that ſo the earth might be as the boſom or " lap of a mother to the deceaſed; and yet, " being expiated by theſe fruits, might be re- " ſtor'd, or rendered uſeful, to the living. Af- " ter the interment, as he further tells us, " followed the *epulæ* or feaſts, at which the " company uſed to appear crown'd; when " they ſpoke in praiſe of the dead, ſo far as " they could go with truth, it being eſteem'd " a notorious wickedneſs to lie upon ſuch an " occaſion [k]." A rule that very well deſerves to be obſerved in making panegyricks or encomiums on the dead in Funeral Sermons and Orations; in many of which, I fear, the bounds of truth are too often exceeded. And not only at thoſe feaſts, but [l] even before the company departed from the ſepulchre, they were ſometimes entertain'd with a panegyrick upon the dead perſon.

[g] De legibus, l. 2. prope finem. [h] Diogen. Laert. in vit. Solon. [i] Ælian Var. Hiſt. l. 5. c. 14. & 7. 19. [k] Cicero, ibid. [l] Potter's Archæolog. Græc. Vol. 2. Book 4. Chap. 8.

The

The *Grecian* ſoldiers, who died in war, had not only their tombs adorned with inſcriptions ſhewing their names, parentage, and exploits, but were alſo honoured with an Oration in their praiſe. Particularly the cuſtom among the *Athenians* in the interment of their ſoldiers was as follows [m], *viz.* "They uſed to place the "bodies of their dead in tents three days be- "fore the funeral, that all perſons might have "opportunity to find out their relations, and "pay their laſt reſpects to them: Upon the "fourth day, a coffin of cypreſs was ſent from "every tribe, to convey the bones of their "own relations; after which went a covered "herſe, in memory of thoſe whoſe bodies "could not be found. All theſe, accompanied "with the whole body of the people, were "carried to the publick burying place, call'd "*Ceramicus*, and there interr'd. One Ora- "tion was ſpoken in commendation of them "all, and their monuments adorned with "pillars, inſcriptions, and all other orna- "ments uſual about the tombs of the moſt ho- "nourable perſons. The Oration was pro- "nounced by the fathers of the deceas'd per- "ſons, who had behaved themſelves moſt vali- "antly. Thus after the famous battle at *Mara- "thon*, the fathers of *Callimachus*, and *Cynægy- "rus*, were appointed to make the Funeral "Oration [n]. And upon the return of the day,

[m] Ibid. B. 3. ch. xi. p. 103, 105. [n] Polemo in Argumento τῶν ἐπιταφίων λόγων.

" upon which the ſolemnity was firſt held, the " ſame Oration was conſtantly repeated eve- " ry year [o]."

From the *Egyptians* and *Grecians*, eſpecially from the latter, the *Romans* received many of their laws and cuſtoms, as well as much of their polytheiſm and idolatrous worſhip. It is well known that the cuſtom of making Funeral Orations in praiſe of the dead obtain'd among them. The manner in which their funeral ſervices were performed is as follows [p]: " Upon the eighth day, *h. e.* after " the perſons deceaſe, a certain cryer, in man- " ner of a bell-man, went about the town to " call the people to the ſolemnization of the " funeral, in this form of words [q], *Exequias* " *L. Titio L. Filio quibus eſt commodum ire.* " *Jam tempus eſt, ollus ex ædibus effertur.* " After the people had aſſembled themſelves " together, the bed being covered with pur- " ple, or other rich coverings, the laſt con- " clamation being ended, a trumpeter went be- " fore all the company, certain poor women, " called *Præficæ*, following after, and ſinging " ſongs in the praiſe of the party deceaſed. " Thoſe that carried this bed, were the next " of the kin, ſo that it fell often among the " ſenators themſelves to bear the corps; and " becauſe the poorer ſort were not able to un- " dergo the charges of ſuch ſolemnities, there-

[o] Cicero de Oratore. Antholog. l. 2. ſect. 2. c. 21.

[p] Godwin's Rom. Hiſt.

[q] Roſin. Antiq. l. 5.

" upon

" upon were they buried commonly in the dusk
" of the evening; and hence a *veſpertino tem-*
" *pore*, thoſe that carried the corps, were
" termed *veſpæ* or *veſpillones*. In the burial
" of a ſenator, or chief officer, certain waxen
" images of all his predeceſſors were carried
" before him upon long poles or ſpears, toge-
" ther with all the enſigns of honour which he
" deſerved in his life time. Moreover, if
" any ſervants had been manumized by him,
" they accompanied the mourners, lamenting
" for their maſter's death. After the corps
" followed the dead man's children, the next of
" the kin, and other of his friends, *atrati*, that
" is to ſay, in mourning apparel.—The corps
" being thus brought into their great Oratory,
" called the *Roſtra*, the next of the kin [r] *lau-*
" *dabat defunctum pro roſtris, id eſt*, made a
" Funeral Oration in the commendations prin-
" cipally of the party deceaſed, but touching
" the worthy acts alſo of thoſe his predeceſ-
" ſors, whoſe images were there preſent."

The account given by a later [s] writer, is in theſe words: " In all the funerals of note,
" ſays he, eſpecially in the publick or *indictive*,
" the corps was firſt brought, with a vaſt train
" of followers, into the *Forum*; here one of the
" neareſt relations aſcended the *Roſtra*, and
" obliged the audience with an Oration in
" praiſe of the deceaſed. If none of the kin-

[r] Sueton. Jul. Cæſar. c. 6. [s] Kennet's Antiq. of Rome, Part 2. B. 5. ch. 10. p. 351.

" dred undertook the office, it was discharged
" by some of the most eminent persons in the
" city for learning and eloquence, as *Appian*
" reports of the funeral of *Sylla* [t]. And *Pliny* [u]
" the younger, reckons it as the last addition
" to the happiness of a very great man, that
" he had the honour to be praised at his fune-
" ral by the most eloquent *Tacitus*, then Con-
" sul. Which is agreeable to *Quintilian's* [x]
" account of this matter, *Nam & funebres, &c.*
" *For the Funeral Orations*, says he, *depend*
" *very often on some publick office, and by or-*
" *der of senate, are many times given in*
" *charge to the magistrates, to be performed*
" *by themselves in person.* The invention of
" this custom is generally attributed to *Vale-*
" *rius Poplicola*, soon after the expulsion of
" the regal family. *Plutarch* tells us, that
" *honouring his collegue's obsequies with a Fu-*
" *neral Oration, it so pleased the* Romans,
" *that it became customary for the best men,*
" *to celebrate the funerals of great persons*
" *with speeches in their commendations.*"

Thus *Julius Cæsar* [y], according to custom, made an Oration in the *Rostra*, in praise of his wife *Cornelia*, and his aunt *Julia*, when dead; wherein he shewed, that his aunt's de-scent, by her mother's side, was from Kings, and by her Father's, from the Gods. *Plu-*

[t] Ἐμφυλ, lib 1. [u] Lib. 2. Ep. 1. [x] Instit. lib. 3. c. 9. [y] Suet. in Jul. Cæsar, c. 6.

tarch

tarch says [z], that "He approved of the law "of the *Romans*, which ordered suitable "praises to be given to women as well as to "men, after death." Though by what he says in another place [a], it seems that the old *Roman* law was, that Funeral Orations should be made only for the elder women; and therefore he says, that *Cæsar* was the first that made one upon his own wife, it not being then usual to take notice of younger women in that way: but by that action, he gained much favour from the populace, who afterwards looked upon him, and loved him as a very mild and good man. The reason why such a law was made in favour of the women, *Livy* [b] tells us, was this, That when there was such a scarcity of money in the publick treasury, that the sum agreed upon to give the *Gauls*, to break up the siege of the city and *Capitol*, could not be raised, the women collected among themselves, and made it up; who hereupon, had not only thanks given them, but this additional honour, that after death, they should be solemnly praised as well as the men: which looks as if before this time, only the men had those Funeral Orations made for them.

But to proceed: This custom of the *Romans* very early obtained among the Christians;

[z] De mulier. virtut. in principio. [a] In vit. Cæsar. in principio. [b] Hist. ab U. C. l. 5. c. 50.

some

ſome of their Funeral Sermons or Orations are now extant, as that of *Euſebius* on *Conſtantine*, and thoſe of *Nazianzen* on *Baſil* and *Cæſarius*; and of *Ambroſe* on *Valentinian*, *Theodoſius*, and others. *Gregory*, the Brother of *Baſil* [c], made, ἐπικήδειον λόγον, a Funeral Oration for *Melitius* Biſhop of *Antioch*: in which Orations, they not only praiſed the dead, but addreſſed themſelves to 'em, which ſeems to have introduced the cuſtom of praying to departed ſaints. Now theſe Orations were uſually made [d] before the bodies of the deceaſed were committed to the ground, which cuſtom has been, more or leſs, continued ever ſince, to this day.

And now, Sir, having thus far proceeded in my enquiries on this ſubject, I cannot but conclude, that thoſe rites and ceremonies among the Heathens, which have been thus deliver'd from one people to another, are what have given birth to Funeral Sermons and Orations among us Chriſtians; and tho' the practice, no doubt, is conſiderably improved, and cleared of many things which would ſmell too rank of paganiſm, and is thrown into a method which, perhaps, may be of ſome ſervice to Chriſtianity, yet notwithſtanding this new dreſs, its original may very eaſily be diſcerned. The method in which the characters of deceaſed perſons are given in our Funeral Sermons, is

[c] Socrat. Eccl. Hiſt. l. 5. c. 9. [d] Onuphrius de ſepel. mort. c. 8.

very

very much the ſame with that obſerved in thoſe pagan Orations, where firſt an account is given of the parentage of the deceaſed, then of his education; after that, we hear of his conduct in riper years: then his many virtues are reckoned up, with his generous, noble, and excellent performances.

I would not be underſtood as tho' I condemn'd the practice becauſe of its riſe and original; for why mayn't the cuſtoms of Heathens, if juſt and laudable in themſelves, and no ways pernicious to Chriſtianity in their conſequences, be followed by us Chriſtians? And ſeeing we are come into this practice, there's one thing we ſhould take care to follow them in, and that is, not to make thoſe Sermons or Orations for every one; but for thoſe only whoſe characters are diſtinguiſhing, who have been eminently uſeful in the world, and in the church of Chriſt. The old Heathens only honoured thoſe with this part of the funeral ſolemnity, who were men of probity and juſtice, or renown'd for their wiſdom and knowledge, or famous for warlike exploits: This, as *Cicero* informs us, being part of the law for burials, which directs, that the praiſes only of honourable perſons ſhall be mentioned in the Oration [e]. The *Jews* alſo make Funeral Orations [f] in praiſe of the par-

[e] Honoratorum virorum laudes in concione memorantor, &c. De legibus, l. 2. prope finem. [f] Buxtorf. Jud. Synag. c. 49. Leo. Modena. *Hiſt. of the rites, cuſtoms, &c. of the preſent* Jews, Par. 5. c. 8. ſect. 4.

ty deceaſed, provided he's a perſon of note, or a man of worth and value amongſt them, ſuch as the miniſter of the congregation, or the like. It would be much more agreeable, if our funeral diſcourſes were not ſo common, and if the characters given of the deceaſed were more juſt; devoid of that fulſom flattery, with which they too often abound. I would not be underſtood, as though I thought the deceaſed Lady, whoſe funeral ſermons have occaſion'd this Eſſay, was a perſon undeſerving of having her memory perpetuated this way, or that what is there ſaid of her is not juſt and true.

As for ſcripture hiſtory, I cannot, *Sir*, recollect any paſſage which gives countenance to our practice, unleſs that ſhort oration of *David*'s, at the grave of *Abner*, may be judg'd of this ſort, 2 *Sam.* iii. 33, 34. *Joſephus* [g] ſeems to have this view of it, when he ſays, *David* buried him very magnificently, and compoſed funeral Lamentations for him.

And 'tis obſervable, that *Cocceius*, in his Funeral Oration on *Maccovius*, after he had remarked, that the Practice was agreeable, not only to the antient Cuſtom of that Univerſity, before whom he delivered it; but alſo to the Cuſtoms of the *Athenians* and *Romans*, who judged it very ornamental and profitable to the Commonwealth, to praiſe thoſe who had been famous in peace or war:

[g] ἐπιταφίους συγγεγραμμένος θρήνους. Antiq. lib. 7.

he

he further directs his auditors to *David's Elogium* on *Saul* and *Jonathan*, in 2 *Sam.* i. 17, *&c.* and to the anniversary lamentation of the daughters of *Israel* for the daughter of *Jephthah*, in *Judges* xi. 40. in favour of this custom. But, with submission, I take it, that these instances will rather justify the use of funeral odes, than of funeral sermons and orations.

And now, *Sir*, If, I thought, I should not trespass too much upon your patience, I would briefly enquire into the rise and original of our funeral elegies and odes, which are likewise made to perpetuate the memory, and celebrate the praises of the dead. Who were the inventors of elegy is very uncertain, for *Horace* tells us it was controverted in his time, and left undetermined by the criticks [h]. As to the original of the name, the *Grecians* [i] " had a cu-
" stom of drawling out their words, and re-
" peating the Interjection, ἐ, ἐ, ἐ, ἐ, with tears;
" and hence, if we may credit the *Scholiast*
" upon *Aristophanes* [k], funeral lamentations
" were called ἔλεγοι, *Elegies*.

With respect to singing at the interment of the dead, *Macrobius* [l] says, " It is establish'd
" by the practice of most nations or countries,
" who do it upon this perswasion, that after
" the deccase of the body, the soul returns to
" the original of the sweetness of music, *h. e.*
" to heaven " : And 'tis no great difficulty to

[h] De arte poetica. [i] Potter's Archeolog. Græc. Vol. 2. par. 4. ch. 5. [k] Avibus [l] Somn. Scip. l. 2. c. 3.

collect ſome inſtances of this kind.

Potter ſays on this head, that the *Græcians* [m] " had mourners and muſicians to en-
" creaſe the ſolemnity: theſe *Homer* calls
" ἐξάρχους θρήνων, becauſe they endeavoured
" to excite ſorrow in all the company, by
" beating their breaſts, and counterfeiting
" all the actions of the moſt real and paſſio-
" nate grief. They are likewiſe termed,
" ἀοιδοί, προσῳδοί, *&c.* from the ſongs they
" ſung at funerals. Of theſe there ſeem to
" have been three, one in the proceſſion, ano-
" ther at the funeral pile, a third at the
" grave." The pipes or flutes they made uſe of at thoſe ſolemnities were thoſe of the *Carian*, *Myſian*, *Lydian*, and *Phrygian* original.

" Thoſe who were killed by Elephants,
" either in the hunting of them, or in Battle,
" *Ælian* informs us [n], were buried very ho-
" nourably, and had certain hymns ſung in
" their honour by the *Lybians*. The argu-
" ment of theſe hymns was, That thoſe were
" valiant men, who engaged with ſuch a
" beaſt; and that the beſt funeral ornament was
" to die glorioufly.

What was the cuſtom of the antient *Romans* in the burial of their dead, is ſufficiently notorious: It has been already obſerved, that at the funeral proceſs, certain poor women, called *Præficæ*, ſung ſongs in the praiſe of the

[m] Potter's Antiq. Vol. 2. [n] Var. Hiſt. l. 12. c. 55.

party

party deceaſed; theſe women were hired for this purpoſe, making a trade of it, and getting their livelihood by it. Beſides theſe, there were alſo, *Siticines*, and *Tibicines*. "The name "*Siticines* [o], *A. Gellius* [p] derives from *ſitus* "and *cano*, from ſinging to the dead: They "were of two ſorts, ſome ſounding on the "trumpet, others on the flute or pipe. That "the trumpets had a ſhare in this ſolemnity, "we learn from *Virgil*, in the funeral of "*Pallas*, *Æn.* xi.

"*Exoritur clamorque virum, clangorque tu-*
"*barum.*

And from *Propertius*, *Lib.* 2. *Eleg.* 7.

"*Ah! mea tum quales caneret tibi, Cyn-*
"*thia, ſomnos*
"*Tibia, funeſta triſtior illa tuba.*

"*Suetonius* [q] mentions the *Tibiæ*, in the "funeral of *Julius Cæſar*, and *Seneca* in that "of *Claudius* [r]; and *Ovid* ſays of himſelf in "plain words,

"*Interea noſtri quid agant niſi triſte libelli?*
"*Tibia funeribus convenit iſta meis*".
Triſt. 5. Eleg. 1.

Cicero [s] ſays, It was the cuſtom, not only that the praiſes of deſerving men ſhould be men-

[o] Kennet's Antiq. par. 2. b. 5. p. 345. [p] Lib. 20. c. 3.
[q] C. 84. [r] Vid. Apocol. [s] De legibus l. 2. prope fin.

tioned in the oration, but alſo " that *Tibici-*
" *nes*, or pipers ſhould follow thoſe commen-
" dations with ſongs, called *Næniæ*; which
" is the name the *Grecians* give to mournful
" ſongs". Theſe *Næniæ* were the ſame with
the [f] *Nugæ* of *Plautus*,

Hæc ſunt non nugæ, non enim mortualia.

Both which may be underſtood of thoſe ſongs which were ſung in praiſe of the dead, at the time of their interment; for the word *Nugæ* is an *Hebrew* word, 'tis uſed in *Zeph.* 3. 18. *I will gather* נוגי *them that are ſorrowful*, which *Jerom* not underſtanding, imagined it was the latin word *Nugæ*, and accordingly rendered it ſo; whereas it comes from יגה which ſignifies to *be ſorrowful*, and here intends ſorrowful perſons; and in *Plautus*, mournful ſongs. Now becauſe a great many weak and fooliſh things were ſaid in thoſe ſongs, as there are in many of our elegies, and funeral odes; the words *Nugæ* and *Næniæ* are frequently uſed for ſilly and trifling things.

So likewiſe among the *Græcians*, " Fune-
" ral dirges [t] were called τάλεμοι, whence τη-
" λιμύζειν is expounded in *Heſychius* by θρηνεῖν,
" to mourn; and τηλεμύζεσθαι is another name
" for mourning women; hence alſo τὰ ταλεμώ-
" δη ſignifies empty and worthleſs things, and

[f] Aſinaria. [t] Potter's Antiq.

" τα-

" πλήμμυρα ψυχρότητος is proverbially apply'd " to insipid and senseless compositions.

Much the same custom obtained among the *Jews*, which 'tis highly probable, they received from some of the neighbouring nations, for they were a people always fond of following the ceremonious practices of the Heathens; they had their מקוננות, or *mourning women*, which were the same with the *Præfica* of the *Romans*, and the τηλεμύζεται of the *Grecians*, just now mentioned, who by their dishevell'd hair, naked breasts, and mournful voice, moved upon the affections, and produced tears from others, as well as set forth the praises of the dead in their songs or funeral odes, being hired by the relations of the deceased for these purposes. *Maimonides* [v] says, That the heirs of the deceased were obliged to give them a reward. The manner in which they perform'd their doleful ditties was this, [w] First one spoke, and then all the rest answered. Of these mourning women, and what they were to do, we read in *Jer.* ix. 17, 18, 19, 21, 22. where the Lord by the prophet, not as approving, but deriding the practice, says, *Consider ye, and call for the mourning women, that they may come*, &c.

Besides these mourning women, they also made use of minstrels and pipes, of these we read in *Matt.* ix. 23. Pipes and such like

[v] Hilchot Ebel. c. 12. s. 1. [w] Moed Katon, c. 3. 9. R. David Kimchi lib. Shoras. rad. קון.

instru-

inſtruments of muſick, were uſed by them at their [x] funerals, as well as at their marriages; and according to their *Rabbins* [y], even the pooreſt man in *Iſrael*, when his wife died, never had leſs than two pipes, and one mourning woman.

The Chriſtians indeed, inſtead of theſe pagan and jewiſh cuſtoms, have ſubſtituted the practice of ſinging of pſalms before the corps, at the burial of the dead; a practice which prevailed very early, and has been approv'd of and eſtabliſhed by Emperors [z], Popes, Fathers, and Councils, and is continued, in many places, to this day; and I can't but be of opinion, that theſe laſt rites and ceremonies among the Heathens, have given birth to our elegiac Verſes, and Odes ſacred to the memory of the dead. Whether *David*'s *Elogium* on *Saul* and *Jonathan*, and the anniverſary celebration of the caſe of *Jephthah*'s daughter by the daughters of *Iſrael* beforemention'd, together with the lamentations of *Jeremiah*, and thoſe of the ſinging men and ſinging women on the death of *Joſiah*, give any countenance to theſe kind of performances, I ſhall not determine.

But leaving theſe enquiries, I ſhall now, Sir, preſent you with my thoughts on thoſe two Funeral Diſcourſes, which have been the

[x] Bava Metzia. c. 6. ſect. 1. Shabbat. c. 23. ſect. 4.
[y] Cetubot. c. 4. ſect. 4. [z] Vid. Roma ſubterranea, Tom. 1. l. 1. c. 19.

occaſion

occaſion of this eſſay. I ſhall begin with Mr. *Harriſon*'s ſermon, not only becauſe it was firſt preached and publiſhed to the world, but becauſe another diſcourſe, prepared on the ſame ſubject, and for the ſame purpoſe, was obliged to give way to it; on which account, one might reaſonably have expected, that this would have been a very valuable and excellent performance, if not an extraordinary one; that it would have been fill'd with ſolid divinity, judicious thoughts, ſtrong reaſoning, and good learning; when, on the contrary, I am bold to ſay, there's neither law nor goſpel, good learning, nor good ſenſe in it; nothing but rant and a meer jingle of words: There appears no more divinity in the ſermon, than there does humanity in his conduct; 'tis an empty, jejune, trifling work. "The Apoſtle *Paul*, he ſays [a], had a fine imagination, as well as a ſolid judgment." Indeed he had, and, I ſuppoſe, he means, that they both appear particularly in the [b] text, the ſubject of this diſcourſe; and ſo they do, but it will be exceeding difficult to obſerve any thing like either throughout the whole diſcourſe upon it. One would have thought, that a man inſiſting on ſo fruitful a text, could not have failed of expreſſing himſelf as fully and largely, both on the nature of the grace and doctrine of faith, had he underſtood either, as the bounds of a ſingle diſcourſe would admit of.

[a] Sermon, p. 8. [b] Which is 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8.

But

But here's no notice taken, either of the Apoſtle's faith, or any others, but a ſtudious concern appears, throughout the whole, even to avoid thoſe deſcriptions of the people of God, which are taken from their faith: inſtead of which, we have *the ſincerely good*, *the ſincere followers of the lamb*, *ſincere profeſſors*, *the good man*, *the virtuous man*, &c. But I had almoſt forgot that this ſermon was calculated for the polite part of the town, to whom thoſe ſounds, *believers*, *converted perſons*, *regenerate ones*, &c. are as diſagreeable, as the characters expreſſed by 'em are unſuitable. He tells us [c], that by *the faith*, which the Apoſtle ſays he had kept, "'tis natural, in this place, "to underſtand the doctrine of the Goſpel." It would have been well if he had thought fit to have given us ſome account of it, and not to have run out in thoſe wild excurſions another way, which are foreign from his text, and the doctrine of the goſpel; for he is not contented ſilently to paſs over the great doctrines of faith, but throws out his indigeſted crudities to the ſhame and reproach of 'em, nay in direct oppoſition to them, ſome inſtances of which I'll juſt obſerve to you. I'll give you his entire paragraphs, that I may not in the leaſt injure him, or curtail his ſenſe.

And the firſt faulty paragraph I ſhall take notice of, we have *p.* 17. which is as follows, "Though the Apoſtle had deſcribed his own

[c] Sermon, p. 11.

"con-

" conduct, which had ſomething peculiar to " his publick ſtation, though he had been " viewing *a crown, the luſtre of which was* " *to bear a proportion to his attainments and* " *labours*; yet he intimated, that in ſome " things, there was an agreement between " his caſe, and that of chriſtians in general, " both as to ſervice and reward." In what is here ſaid, I am very much miſtaken, if he has not obſcur'd the luſtre of the grace of God, the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, the purchaſe of the Redeemer's blood, and the crown of life it ſelf, as well as put too great a luſtre upon the attainments and labours of a creature; for what proportion can there be between the crown of life, and the beſt performances of men? There is a proportion between ſin and death, but none between eternal life and works of righteouſneſs which we have done: *The wages*, the juſt *wages of ſin is death* [d], *but eternal life is the gift of God, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord.* The whole of our ſalvation, from firſt to laſt, is wholly owing to the grace of God, excluſive of, and in contradiſtinction from any ſort of works whatever, performed by mortals. The choice of perſons to this crown, is an inſtance of ſpecial and diſtinguiſhing grace, for which reaſon 'tis called an *election of grace*; upon the mentioning of which, the Apoſtle argues after this nervous manner [e], *if it be of grace, then is it*

[d] Rom. vi. 23. [e] Rom. xi. 5, 6.

no more of works, otherwiſe grace is no more grace; but if it be of works, then is it no more of grace, otherwiſe work is no more work. And in another place: we are *juſtified freely by his grace* [f], *through the redemption that is in Chriſt Jeſus.* The pardon of our ſins [g] is *according to the riches of his grace*, ſo is our regeneration, and final perſeverance; and the finiſhing of the whole work of ſalvation, will be attended with the ſhouts of Angels and Saints [h], *crying, grace, grace unto it*: for 'tis [i] *not by works of righteouſneſs which we have done; but according to his mercy, he hath ſaved us by the waſhing of regeneration, and the renewing of the holy Ghoſt.* The grace of God is a bright and ſparkling jewel in this crown of righteouſneſs, the glory of which will appear in it to all eternity, with an amazing and ſoul-raviſhing luſtre; and therefore to ſay, that the luſtre of this crown is to bear a proportion to the attainments and labours of men, without taking any notice of the grace of God, which ſhines ſo reſplendently in it, is to obſcure the luſtre of this grace.

Again, the luſtre of this crown, is to bear a proportion to the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, from whence it takes its name. 'Tis this which gives a perſon an undoubted right and title to it [k], *being juſtified by his grace, we are made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.* Without this there will be no ad-

[f] Rom. iii. 24. [g] Eph. i. 7. [h] Zech. iv. 7.
[i] Tit. iii. 5. [k] Tit. iii. 7.

miſſion

miſſion into God's kingdom and glory, let a man's labours and attainments be what they will, for if he's deſtitute of this he's an unrighteous perſon, and *the unrighteous ſhall not inherit the kingdom of God*[l]. Thoſe who are found without this *wedding garment*, though they may have [m] *propheſied in* Chriſt's *name, and in* his *name have caſt out devils, and done many wonderful works*; yet the judge will ſay to them, *I never knew you, depart from me ye that work iniquity*; and will give orders [n] to *bind* them *hand and foot*, and *caſt* them *into outer darkneſs*, where will be *weeping and gnaſhing of teeth*; wherefore, to ſay, that the luſtre of the crown of righteouſneſs is to bear a proportion to the attainments and labours of a creature, without taking any manner of notice of the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, which is our only title to this crown, between both which, there is the moſt juſt and adequate proportion, is to obſcure the luſtre of this righteouſneſs.

Again, the luſtre of this crown is to bear a proportion to the purchaſe of Chriſt's blood, and not to the attainments and labours of men; for if *righteouſneſs* [a], life and happineſs, *come by the law*, and men's obedience to it, *then Chriſt is dead in vain*. Mr. *Richardſon*, in his [b] ſermon, has well obſerved, that one re-

[l] 1 Cor. vi. 9. [m] Matt. vii. 22, 23. [n] Matt. xxii. 11, 12, 13. [a] Gal. ii. 21. [b] Page 13. *N. B.* This is the ſermon which was obliged to give way to Mr. *Harriſon*'s ingenious one.

ſon why this crown is called a crown of righteouſneſs is, " becauſe Chriſt has purchaſed it; " and thus God, as a juſt and righteous God, " confers it. There's no degree of happineſs, " adds he, to be enjoyed in a future world, but " what Chriſt has paid a valuable price for, " therefore heaven is called [c], *The purchaſed* " *poſſeſſion.*" Now between this valuable price of Chriſt's blood, and the luſtre of the crown of righteouſneſs, there's a juſt proportion; but none between that, and the attainments and labours of men; to ſay then, that the luſtre of this crown is to bear a proportion to theſe, without taking any notice of the purchaſe of Chriſt's blood, is to obſcure the luſtre and glory of it. Beſides, ſuch a way of ſpeaking muſt obſcure the luſtre of the crown it ſelf; for what luſtre can there be in that crown which only bears a proportion to the attainments and labours of men, when their beſt [d] *righteouſneſs* is *as filthy rags*, and they themſelves are *as an unclean thing*? But to ſay, that it bears a proportion to the riches of God's grace, to the royal robe of Chriſt's righteouſneſs, to the invaluable purchaſe of his Blood, is to ſpread, to increaſe, and ſet off in the beſt manner, the luſtre of this crown.

Moreover, ſuch an expreſſion as this, puts too great a luſtre upon the attainments and labours of a creature, tho' thoſe attainments and labours may be never ſo great and conſiderable:

[c] Eph. i. 14. [d] Iſa. lxiv. 6.

in-

indeed, the apoſtle *Paul*'s were of this kind; yet I'm ſatisfy'd, he never entertained ſuch an opinion of them as to imagine, that the luſtre of the crown of righteouſneſs he was viewing, was to be proportioned to them. When he compared himſelf with the other apoſtles of Chriſt, he ſays [e], *I am the leaſt of the apoſtles, that am not meet to be called an apoſtle, becauſe I perſecuted the church of God, but by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace which was beſtowed upon me, was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all:* yet obſerve how he corrects himſelf; *yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.* And when he was obliged to make mention of his own attainments and labours, in the vindication of himſelf, againſt the inſults and reproaches of falſe apoſtles; yet how often does he call himſelf a *Fool* [f] for it, and his juſt defence a *ſpeaking fooliſhly in this confidence of boaſting?* He was very well apprized, that tho' he *knew nothing* by himſelf [g], yet he was *not hereby juſtified*; that his right and title to the crown of life did not lie in thoſe things. He accounted that all his attainments and labours, whether before or after converſion, were but *loſs* and *dung* [h], *for the excellency of the knowledge of Chriſt Jeſus* his *Lord*. And indeed, there's no more proportion between our beſt performances and eternal Life,

[e] 1 Cor. xv. 9, 10. [f] 2 Cor. xi. 16, 17, 21, 23.
[g] 1 Cor. iv. 4. [h] Phil. 3. 8.

than

than there is between a *crown* and a *dung-hill*: Yea, he reckoned, that his *ſufferings* [i] for Chriſt, which were the greateſt as well as the pureſt part of his ſervice for him, were *not worthy to be compared with the glory which ſhall be revealed*: So little reaſon had Mr. *Harriſon*, from the apoſtle's mouth to conclude, that *he had been viewing a crown, the luſtre of which was to bear a proportion to his attainments and labours.* But no more of this.

I go on to conſider another faulty paragraph of his, which you'll find in *p.* 20. it runs thus, "Should it not then raiſe our "wonder, to the higheſt pitch, that *he will* "*recompenſe us for theſe ſhort ſervices, which* "*are very imperfect, with an incorruptible* "*crown*? That he will ſend his only begot-"ten Son from his throne in heaven, to meet "us, and conduct us to everlaſting manſions? "well might St. *John* ſay [k] *God is love*". The ſame *ſpirit of error* appears in this as in the former paragraph; but if any thing, it appears here more barefac'd: He acknowledges that our ſervices are *ſhort*, and very *imperfect*; and yet ſays, that God will *recompenſe* us *for* them, and that *with an incorruptible crown.* Alas, what profit and advantage can our ſhort and imperfect ſervices be to God, that he ſhould recompenſe us *for* them after this manner! [l] *Who hath firſt given to him, and it ſhall*

[i] Rom. viii. 18.
[k] 1 John iv. 8.
[l] Rom. xi. 34.

be

be recompenſed unto him again? [m] *Verily, there is a reward for the righteous*; but not for his own righteouſneſs ſake, but for the righteouſneſs of Chriſt imputed to him, which only can truly and properly denominate him a righteous man. [n] *In keeping of* the commandments of God, *there is great reward* even in this world, but not *for* keeping of them; much leſs in that which is to come. God indeed does reward his own grace which he has beſtowed upon his people, and therefore faith, hope, confidence, *&c.* [o] have *a great recompenſe of reward* even now, and will be *found unto praiſe* [p] *and honour and glory at the appearing of Chriſt*; but God never rewards his people *for* their ſervices, tho' he rewards 'em *in* his ſervice; for when they have done all they can, they have done but their duty, and muſt acknowlege themſelves [q] *unprofitable ſervants*. Heaven is indeed called [r] the *reward of the inheritance*, and [s] *the recompenſe of the reward*; but as the Apoſtle *Paul* ſays, [t] *the reward is not reckoned of debt, but of grace.*

Give me leave, Sir, to tranſcribe one paragraph more, which is in *p.* 21. "Let me "therefore, ſays he, recommend this to you "with the greateſt earneſteſs, *that you would* "*now ſecure the favour of your judge*: if

[m] Pſal. lviii. 11. [n] Pſal. xix. 11. [o] Heb. x. 35. [p] 1 Pet. i. 6. [q] Luke xvii. 10. [r] Col. iii. 24. [s] Heb. xi. 26. [t] Rom. iv. 4.

"you

" you think ſeriouſly on the ſubject, you " will confeſs, that it deſerves your beſt re- " gards, whatever the language of your " practice has been." If by *the favour of the judge*, he means the love of Jeſus Chriſt to ſinners, that is not to be *ſecured now*, nor does it need any ſecurity from creatures. Chriſt fixed his love upon his people before the world began [u]: *When there was no depth, no fountains abounding with water, while as yet* God *had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the higheſt part of the duſt of the world*, Chriſt was *rejoicing in the habitable parts of his earth*, and his *delights were with the ſons of men*; and theſe have continued with them ever ſince; for *having* [w] *loved his own which were in the world, he loved them to the end.* There's no danger of loſing his love and favour where it is once fix'd, for 'tis like himſelf, *the ſame yeſterday, to day, and for ever* [x]. There can be no alteration made in it, nor any ſeparation from it, for *who* [y] or what *ſhall ſeparate from the love of Chriſt?* But if by ſecuring it, he means getting an evidence, a manifeſtation, a knowledge of intereſt in his love, why muſt the ſpirit of God be neglected as uſeleſs? and why is the creature ſet to work for it alone, without any hint of gracious aſſiſtance from him, eſpecially when it is his peculiar work [z] to *take* of the things

[u] Prov. viii. 24, 26----31. [w] John xiii. 1. [x] Heb. xiii. 8. [y] Rom. viii. 35. [z] John xvi. 15.

of

of Chriſt, and *ſhew* them to us; the love of Chriſt [a], and *ſhed it abroad in us*; and ſo [b] *to direct* our *hearts into* it, that [c] we *may be able to comprehend with all ſaints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and to know the love of Chriſt which paſſeth knowledge.* Again, if by *the favour* of *the judge*, he means the favourable regards of Chriſt, conſider'd in that character to criminals, and that thoſe favourable regards are to be *ſecured* by their application to him, 'tis a vile reflection on him, as the judge of the whole earth, who always will do *right*; whoſe *judgment is*, and ever will be, *according to truth*, not to be govern'd by favour and affection to any. He is *of quick underſtanding* [d] *in the fear of the Lord, he* will *not judge after the ſight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears, but with righteouſneſs* will *he judge the poor, and reprove with equity, for the meek of the earth.* He is not to be bribed with any of the gifts, preſents, or ſervices, that any of his creatures are capable of bringing him; his favour is not to be ſecured by any method of theirs [e]: *Will he eſteem* their *riches? No, not gold, nor all the forces of ſtrength.* Could they give him *thouſands of rams*, or *ten thouſands of rivers of oil*, theſe would not ingratiate 'em into his favour: all their repentings, cries and tears, can

[a] Rom. v. 5. [b] 2 Theſſ. iii. 5. [c] Eph. iii. 18, 19. [d] Iſ. xi. 3, 4. [e] Job xxxvi. 19.

never work upon his affections; nor can all their ſervices and performances recommend 'em to his regard: Nothing ſhort of a perfect righteouſneſs, anſwerable to the righteous law by which all ſhall be judged, will be taken notice of by him. If he of his own grace and favour, as a *Saviour*, does not ſecure them by cloathing 'em with his own righteouſneſs; they can never ſecure his favour, as a *judge*, by any thing they can do. The ſaints themſelves will be admitted into heaven, not by *the favour of* the *Judge*, but by the *righteouſneſs of the Redeemer*; their acquittance before men and angels, will not be an *act of favour* but of *righteouſneſs*. The ſame degree of ſtrict juſtice will appear in the awful procedure with them, as with others [f]; *for we muſt all appear before the judgment ſeat of Chriſt, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad:* and at this bar, their only ſecurity will be the righteouſneſs of the Son of God, which will be ſufficient, according to the ſtrict rules of juſtice, to *anſwer for* them. If therefore Mr. *Harriſon* has any regard to the ſalvation of the ſouls of men to whom he preaches, he ought to direct them, not to ſeek the favour of the judge, but the grace and righteouſneſs of the Redeemer.

[f] 2 Cor. v. 10.

I ſhall not, Sir, trouble you any longer with remarks of this kind. I can't but obſerve, that this is the uſual ſtrain of Funeral Sermons publiſh'd to the world; for which reaſon I cannot have the greateſt opinion of them. I muſt confeſs there are ſome exceptions from this obſervation, and I take Mr. *Richardſon*'s ſermon to be one, which was preached upon the ſame ſubject, and for the ſame purpoſe as this. There are many things in it, which I perſwade my ſelf will be grateful and pleaſing to you. I'll juſt give you ſome few hints, which ſhew his regard to the doctrines of the Goſpel.

In *p.* 18. he gives a plain intimation of his faith in the doctrine of election; a doctrine that has always been a burthenſome ſtone, an immoveable rock to all its adverſaries, where ſpeaking of the glories of heaven, he has theſe words, "There, ſays he, the whole "ELECT of *Jeſus*, who have lived in the "different ages, and dwelt in the ſeveral "corners of the world, ſhall make one glo-"rious body, one triumphant aſſembly."

In *p.* 14. he expreſſes himſelf on the head of Chriſt's ſuretyſhip engagements, and undertakings for his people, and his compleat performance of them, after this manner: "As "the Redeemer failed not in any part of his *un-*"*dertakings* for his people, agreeable to his "own *engagements*, ſo the Father has obliged "himſelf to beſtow all the glory and felicity "upon *his ſeed*, which he has purchaſed for

" them." Which is a brief ſummary of the covenant of grace.

Again, *p.* 12. ſpeaking of the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, he has expreſt his ſentiments very judiciouſly, " When, ſays he, the Chri-" ſtian hath made the greateſt advances in ho-" lineſs, he cannot but reflect upon the whole " of his conduct with ſhame and bluſhing : " 'tis in the righteouſneſs of the Redeemer on-" ly, we can appear ſpotleſs at the throne of " God; this is the Chriſtian's ſole dependance, " this his joy, this his comfort, under a view " of his own imperfections, even this, that " he has a righteouſneſs to truſt to, and de-" pend upon, which is equal to all that the " law has demanded." This one ſingle paragraph, I'll venture to ſay, is worth Mr. *Harriſon*'s whole ſermon.

In *p.* 22. he aſcribes the work of grace in its implantation and exerciſe, to the Spirit of God, and aſſerts the abſolute neceſſity of it, to the performance of good works with acceptance ; where, ſpeaking of the meetneſs or fitneſs of ſaints for Chriſt's appearance, he ſays : " This, divines call either habitual or actual ; " by the former, they underſtand thoſe graces " that accompany ſalvation, and are implanted " in the ſoul by the holy Spirit, whereby they " are *turned from darkneſs to light, and* " *from the power of Satan unto God.* And by " the latter, a lively exerciſe of thoſe graces " implanted by the Spirit ; for grace in the

" ſoul

" ſoul is an active principle, and the beſt teacher " of good works, without which indeed, " none can be performed acceptable unto " God." And in *p.* 11. he ſays, that God " carries on *this work*, notwithſtanding all " difficulties and oppoſitions, with victorious " efficacy." He aſſerts, in *p.* 10. the neceſſity of " receiving ſtrength from Chriſt for " performing the ſeveral parts of evangelical " obedience." And in *p.* 9. gives his thoughts of the final perſeverance of the ſaints, in theſe words: " Many ſnares are laid in the " Chriſtian's way to hinder his progreſs to- " wards heaven; yet is he enabled to walk " agreeable to the rules which Chriſt has pre- " ſcribed, without being led away with the " error of the wicked, or falling from his " own ſtedfaſtneſs."

Theſe, Sir, I preſume, are the reaſons why this diſcourſe was ſlighted and diſcourag'd, and deſign'd to be ſtifled in the *Embryo*, never to have ſeen the light; the above doctrines not being agreeable to the *taſte* of the polite part of the town; But ſure I am, they are ſo to every one that has *taſted that the Lord is gracious*: And I am very glad to obſerve, that they were to the Lady deceaſed. I think that part of her character, which Mr. *Richardſon* has given, adds a glory to the whole of it, when he tells us[8]: " Her hopes of everlaſting life, as ſhe de- " clared to him, were entirely placed on Chriſt

[8] Page 30.

" and

" and his righteouſneſs, uſing theſe words, " *there we are ſafe.*"

But, Sir, before I conclude, I muſt beg leave to return again to Mr. *Harriſon.* He has been pleas'd to favour us with the *Oration* which he deliver'd at the grave. I ſhall not trouble you with remarking his unguarded ſentences, his low thoughts, and mean compliance to a certain ſet of men, which are too viſible in it: I only think, 'tis pity he had not publiſhed his own prayer, and the Lord's-Prayer, with the benediction at the end of it, which it ſeems were alſo delivered at the time of interment, and then we ſhould have had a compleat form of ſervice for the burial of the dead. He obſerves to us, that " the ſervice frequently per- " formed amongſt the diſſenters at the burial of " the dead,", is in this form, whereas there are but very few diſſenters in the nation that uſe any ſervice at all, at the burial of their dead, but in this city of *London*; where the greateſt part alſo make no Orations at ſuch times, and ſome of thoſe that do, make no prayer at all, and ſtill fewer uſe the Lord's-Prayer: But perhaps, our Orator, is in expectation of making this practice, in time, more common by his example.

He has alſo publiſhed an Ode, ſacred to the memory of the deceaſed Lady: I confeſs, Sir, I have but little judgment in poetry, yet I'm ready to conclude, 'tis the beſt of theſe his performances.

In

In the dedication of his ſermon to the worthy Gentleman, and Lady, there addreſſed, he appeals to their ſenſes, that it was *compoſed* at their requeſt, tho' in order to be *preached* by another; and therefore it is very cautiouſly expreſſed: *a requeſt*, ſays he, *which was contrary to my expectation*, and, indeed, an unheard of one, and which a man of any honour, would never have complied with; tho' he has the vanity to add, "*but founded on* "*reaſons which both to you and to me*, fine "language! *appear to be capable of the fulleſt* "*vindication.*" And pray now, What were theſe reaſons? Why, ſuſpicions of Mr. *Richardſon*'s ability to compoſe, preach, and publiſh a ſermon, which might be acceptable. What little reaſon there was for thoſe ſuſpicions, the world is now capable of judging, ſeeing the diſcourſe is made publick; and you, Sir, may eaſily conclude, from the few hints I have extracted out of it. Mr. *Harriſon* tells them, *a very ſmall time was allotted* him *for finiſhing the diſcourſe*; time enough, unleſs it had been better performed. He goes on with compliments upon *Sir* and *Madam*, and concludes with praying for them, that they might long *enjoy together the bleſſings of an indulgent providence*, that they might be *eminently uſeful, and extenſively happy*; which, by the help of tranſpoſition, would make a beautiful ſentence; and that *at laſt*, they might *receive a diſtinguiſhing crown*: but whether he means one dif-

different from that in the text, I cannot say. I ſubjoin to this, that I apprehend it would not have been amiſs, if he had had the ingenuity to have acknowledged, that the character which he gave in his ſermon of the deceaſed Lady, was drawn up by this Gentleman to whom the dedication is made; whereas, he has publiſhed it to the world as his own, without giving the leaſt hint of it.

And now, Sir, I ſhall detain you no longer; excuſe the freedom I have taken with you. If the reading theſe lines gives you any ſatisfaction, or the publiſhing of 'em may be a means to reform this vain man, I ſhall heartily rejoice: Only I deſire you would obſerve, that Mr. *Richardſon* is entirely ignorant of the contents of this Letter, that he knows nothing of my writing to you on this ſubject, nor of my deſign to do ſo; nor has he in the leaſt inſtigated me to it.

I am, Sir,

Your very much obliged, *&c.*